loans granted in the context of militancy and the request of Jammy & Kashmir for write off of the State's outstanding liability on Government of India loans would also be considered.

(b) Orders have been issued regarding waiving of the repayment obligation on the balance unpaid instalments for the years 1997-98 to 1999-2000 in respect of the special term loans given to the State of Punjab during the years 1984-85 to 1993-94 for combating insurgency and militancy in the State. No order has been issued in the case of Jammu & Kashmir as the State receives special financial assistance to compensate for its non-plan deficit.

(c) North Eastern States already receive special assistance of various types to neutralise their specific financial burden arising out of militancy and other factors.

Extension of Ahmedabad Airport

*94. SHRI BRAHMAKUMAR BHATT:
SHRIMATI URMILABEN CHIMANBHAI PATEL:

Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government has included the work of extension of Ahmedabad airport in the budget of financial year 1997-98;

(b) if not, what is the probable year; and

(c) by when actual work for development of Ahmedabad airport will start?

THE MINISTER OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI C.M. IBRAHIM): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) Does not arise.

(c) The detailed engineering and tender formalities of the project for the extension of runway to 11,500 ft. and associated works at an estimated cost of Rs. 48.50 crores shall be completed during the year 1997-98 and physical work will be taken up during the year 1998-99.

Tourists from Abroad

*95. DR. MANMOHAN SINGH: Will the Minister of TOURISM be pleased to state:

(a) how does the trend of tourist arrivals from abroad in 1997-98 compare with the corresponding period in 1995-96 and 1996-97; and

(b) whether Government has drawn up any specific plan to promote tourism in the North-Eastern region; if so, what are the main features of this plan?

THE MINISTER OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS AND MINISTER OF TOURISM (SHRI SRIKANTA KUMAR JENA): (a) The international tourist arrival in India during the period April 1997 to October 1997 as compared to the corresponding period of previous two years are given below:—

Year (April-October)	Tourist Arrivals	%Change
1995-96	1076063	—
1996-97	1134070	5.4
1997-98	1164144	2.7

(b) A Task Force was set-up by the Department of Tourism to study the special problems of the North-Eastern region. The Task Force has recommended improvement of infrastructural facilities including air access, development of specific tourist destinations, human resource development and effective promotional efforts. The Task Force has also identified a number of projects for tourism development in the region and some of them have been prioritised for Central financial assistance during 1997-98.

दवाइयों की कीमतें

*96. **डा० महेश चन्द्र शर्मा:** क्या वित्त मंत्री 15 मई, 1997 को राज्य सभा में अतारांकित प्रश्न 4276 के दिए गए उत्तर को देखेंगे और यह बताने की कृपा करेंगे कि:

(क) नवम्बर, 1997 में एकाधिकार तथा अवरोधक व्यापारिक व्यवहार आयोग को प्राप्त शिकायत के आधार